

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed on February 10, 2005, Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration. Claims 1-34 are pending in this Application. Claims 1, 12, 16, 27, 31, 32, 33 and 34 are independent claims and the remaining claims are dependent claims. In this Amendment, claims 23, 30, 31 and 32 have been amended. A version of the claims containing markings to show the changes made is included hereinabove. Applicants believe that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance. A notice to this affect is respectfully requested.

The Application was objected to because it exceeded 150 words in length. Applicant has amended the Abstract to cure this minor informality. The substitute Abstract which replaces the originally filed Abstract includes 150 words or less. Accordingly, the objection to the Abstract is believed to have been overcome.

The Examiner objected to claims 2-10 and 13-15 due to unnecessary language. The unnecessary language has been deleted. Claim 23 was objected to as missing language, claim 23 has been amended to remove an extra term in the claim. Claim 30 was objected to for depending from a claim of a different type. Claim 30 has been amended to properly depend from the correct base claim. Accordingly, the Examiner's objection to the claims is believed to have been overcome.

Claims 31 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph for having improper antecedent basis for a certain element. Claims 31 and 32 have been amended to correct the instances of improper antecedent basis. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 31 and 32 under §112, second paragraph, is believed to have been overcome.

Claims 1-4, 7-9, 14-19, 22-24, 27 and 29-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. US2003/0039248A1 to Weaver (hereinafter Weaver). Claims 5 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Weaver in view of

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U.S. Patent No. 5,754,768 to Brech et al. (hereinafter Brech). Claims 6 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Weaver in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,298,070 to Carlson et al. (hereinafter Carlson). Claims 10, 13, 25 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Weaver in view of U.S. Patent Publication No.US2003/0046429A1 to Sonksen (hereinafter Sonksen). Claims 11 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Weaver in view of U.S. Patent Publication No.US2002/0042837A1 to Ebata et al. (hereinafter Ebata).

Enclosed herewith is an affidavit of Suchitra Raman, inventor of the present invention. The enclosed affidavit under 37 C.F.R. §1.131 constitutes an uncontested unequivocal statement as to the correctness of the inventorship and that the invention was conceived prior to the filing date of the Weaver reference (August 27, 2001). Applicants respectfully submit that the Weaver reference applied by the Examiner does not qualify as prior art since the affidavit shows that the invention was conceived and reduced to practice prior to the filing date of the Weaver reference. As such, the present invention cannot be anticipated by Weaver, taken alone or in combination with other art. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1-34 under § 102(e) and 103(a) as being anticipated by Weaver and various combinations of Brech, Carlson, Sonksen and Ebata is believed to have been overcome. Accordingly, the rejections of claims 1-34 are believed to have been overcome.

The prior art made of record is not believed to disclose or suggest the present invention.

In view of the above, the Examiner's objections and rejections are believed to have been overcome, placing claims 1-34 in condition for allowance, and reconsideration and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

If the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office deems a fee necessary, this fee may be charged to the account of the undersigned, Deposit Account No. 50-0901.

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If the enclosed papers or fees are considered incomplete, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned collect at (508) 366-9600, in Westborough, Massachusetts.

Respectfully submitted,



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